

REMARKS

Status of the Application

Claims 1-22 are the claims that have been examined in the instant Office Action. Claims 1-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Akiyama, et al. (U.S. 6,022,247).

Claim Rejections -- 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Akiyama et al. (U.S. 6,022,247).

The Examiner alleges that claims 1-22 read on Akiyama. Specifically, the Examiner alleges that FIG. 1-5 describes all of the elements of claims 1-22. With regard to claim 1, the Examiner alleges that element 4 corresponds to the cassette relay block, element 6 corresponds to the lock portion, element 2a corresponds to the peripheral walls on the attaching member, and element 7a corresponds to the locked portion.

In contrast, Applicants respectfully submit Akiyama fails to teach or suggest all of the features recited in claim 1 because Akiyama fails to teach or suggest that the lock portion is disposed inwardly of an outermost wall surface of the cassette relay block.

FIGS. 1-6 of Akiyama disclose an electric wiring block 1 in which a main block body 2 holds a plurality of cassette blocks 3 and 4. The cassette blocks 3 and 4 have lock claws 6 and 11 disposed as projections out side the outermost wall surface of the main body of the cassette blocks 3 and 4. See FIG. 1. Thus, the lock claws 6 and 11 are not disposed inwardly of an outermost wall surface of the cassette relay block, as recited in claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicants submit claim 1 is patentable over the applied art. Further, claims 2-22 are submitted to be patentable, at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 1.

Additionally, Applicants submit that claims 2 and 3 are patentable for reasons independent of their dependency. Claim 2 recites “said lock portion and locked portion are housed in the projected area of a relay attached to said cassette relay block.” The Examiner alleges that Akiyama discloses this aspect of the instant invention, but fails to cite where Akiyama teaches or suggests that the lock and locked portions are housed in the projected area of a relay attached to said cassette relay block. Rather, Akiyama, in FIGS. 1 and 6 indicate that a lock claw and securing rib are located within the electric wiring block body, but no indication is made that an attached relay is projected where the lock claw and securing rib are located.

Thus, Applicants submit claim 2 is patentable over the applied art for this additional reason.

Claim 3 recites “said lock portion is arranged in a range surrounded by crossing outer wall surfaces of the terminal housing parts.” As noted above, the lock claws on the cassette block are projected from the center of the outside walls of the cassette block. See FIG. 1. Thus, the lock claws cannot be arranged in a range by crossing outer wall surfaces, as recited in claim 3.

Thus, Applicants submit claim 3 is patentable over the applied art for this additional reason..

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the

RESPONSE UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
Application No.: 10/539,010

Attorney Docket No.: Q88256

Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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